

*Erratum in the article on "Lightning Conductors," published in the last Journal.*

It gives me regret to have to point out a serious error in my account of the accident by lightning which occurred to Dr. Goodeve's house, in May, 1837. The distance of the part struck from Mr. Trower's conductor, is twenty-two *yards*, instead of twenty *feet*, as stated in my letter.

The error was occasioned by my entrusting the measurement to a native assistant, who no doubt either contented himself by a guess, or unknowingly used the word *feet* instead of *yards* in his report. Illness prevented my making the measurement myself. Fortunately, however, the error does not in the least degree vitiate the argument, in which the accident was mentioned for illustration's sake alone. That the best conductor will not protect a radius of 60 feet (as Biot has assumed it would) is now proved by the history of so many lightning explosions, that an error in one is of no importance whatever. The reader will find in paras. 10, 11, 12, 13, and 14, of my second report, sufficient facts to set this question at rest for ever.

My chief object in noticing the accident to Dr. Goodeve's house was to shew, that one and the same explosion may fall on a conductor and also on other adjacent bodies; that is, that one conductor may not be capable of carrying off the whole of the electricity of a single flash, although the conductor remain unmelted, or even be not perceptibly altered by the heat of the discharge. This view is but strengthened by the occurrence as it now stands in the corrected account. The greater the distance, the more remarkable is it that the primary flash should have been subdivided, as in this instance. Let it be remembered that Dr. Goodeve *saw* the flash strike both objects at the same instant.

I congratulate Mr. Daniell on the occasion thus afforded to him for a further display of the peculiar tone, and temper, which characterized his first report. But I repeat here distinctly, that the error into which I have been betrayed does not in the slightest degree affect the inferences which *all* the facts recorded manifestly lead to---1st, that a conductor, however well constructed does not infallibly protect a space of sixty feet radius,---2d, that a flash of lightning may strike a conductor, and other adjacent objects at the same instant. The occurrence at Dr. Goodeve's house has nothing to do with the discussion regarding the "*lateral discharge*;" and had the accident never taken place, the arguments I advance would not be in the least degree affected. One good result, at all events, will proceed from this mistake---that I shall never again depend on the measurements made by persons who do not understand the object in view, and the necessity for care in their performance of so simple a task.

W. B. O'SHAUGHNESSY.

Calcutta, 10th September, 1840.